

MEASURING THE PERFORMANCE OF 'TRAIN A TRAINER' PROGRAMME : A CASE STUDY IN LONG LAMAI, SARAWAK, MALAYSIA

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Abstract

Long Lamai is a remote rural community, located close to the border between Indonesian Kalimantan and Sarawak in Malaysia. The Penan community has a population of approximately 500 people and they are mostly farmers. They have very limited interconnections with the outside world due to the distance between urban area and their village. Centre of Excellence in Rural Informatics (CoERI) from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak has successfully built a Telecentre which provides facilities of telephone, fax, internet, printing, and photocopying for the local community. Researchers of CoERI could only conduct basic computer trainings for them once in two months due to the high cost of travelling and other commitments. An initiative to overcome this problem has been identified which is by introducing a 'Train a Trainer' programme to the community. The programme is intended to train the locals to become trainers to enable them to train their own community. The paper would discuss on the methods used to design and develop training modules, challenges faced during the implementation and results of the performance of the trainers in conducting their classes. Through this programme, training the locals could greatly help in reducing the costs; however the quality of the training conducted by the locals varies, depending on the modules. This paper also looks at measuring the effectiveness of the programme at Long Lamai, Sarawak, Malaysia.

Keywords: Rural community, telecentres, computer trainings

1 INTRODUCTION

Due to the success of eBario model (as described in Gnaniah et al. (2004)) in setting up a telecentre in Bario, Sarawak, Malaysia, Centre of Excellence in Rural Informatics (CoERI) decided to replicate the model to other communities in rural Malaysia. The eBario success not only increased the communication between the Bario community and the outside world, but also improved their level of English language (Harris & Tarawe, 2006).

In February 2008, the journey to start the process of building of a telecentre in a Penan community in Long Lamai commenced. It was chosen as it satisfies the criteria of a rural telecentre. It is isolated physically, does not have any telecommunication coverage, no 24-hours supply of energy, no road access and there is a willingness of the community to accept the project. Long Lamai has a total population of about 500 and they are mainly subsistence farmers. There is a primary school and the nearest rural clinic is 1-2 hours boat ride.

The first official visit was made in February 2008. During the dialogue with the community, the CoERI team met the community and forward a proposal of building a telecentre in Long Lamai. The community agreed with the idea but requested for time for discussion as not all of members of the community are in